

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Canceled).

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): ~~A video-signal recording and playback apparatus according to claim 1~~ A video-signal recording and playback apparatus for recording or playing back a video signal, said video-signal recording and playback apparatus comprising:  
extracting means for extracting a static picture from a sequence of video signals with a predetermined timing;  
judgment means for forming a judgment as to whether or not a static picture extracted by said extracting means can be used as a representative picture; and  
setting means for setting said static picture as a representative picture in accordance with an outcome of a judgment formed by said judgment means, wherein said judgment means is capable of forming a judgment as to whether or not a static picture extracted by said extracting means can be used as a representative picture on the basis of whether or not said static picture is a part of a commercial.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): ~~A video-signal recording and playback apparatus according to claim 1~~ A video-signal recording and playback apparatus for recording or playing back a video signal, said video-signal recording and playback apparatus comprising:  
extracting means for extracting a static picture from a sequence of video signals with a predetermined timing;  
judgment means for forming a judgment as to whether or not a static picture extracted by said extracting means can be used as a representative picture; and

setting means for setting said static picture as a representative picture in accordance with an outcome of a judgment formed by said judgment means, wherein said judgment means is capable of forming a judgment as to whether or not a static picture extracted by said extracting means can be used as a representative picture on the basis of whether a histogram distribution of said static picture exceeds a predetermined threshold.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): ~~A video-signal recording and playback apparatus according to claim 1~~ A video-signal recording and playback apparatus for recording or playing back a video signal, said video-signal recording and playback apparatus comprising:  
extracting means for extracting a static picture from a sequence of video signals with a predetermined timing;

judgment means for forming a judgment as to whether or not a static picture extracted by said extracting means can be used as a representative picture; and

setting means for setting said static picture as a representative picture in accordance with an outcome of a judgment formed by said judgment means, wherein said judgment means is capable of forming a judgment as to whether or not a static picture extracted by said extracting means can be used as a representative picture on the basis of an edge of said static picture.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A video-signal recording and playback method adopted in a video-signal recording and playback apparatus for recording or playing back a video signal, said video-signal recording and playback method comprising:

an extracting step of extracting a static picture from a sequence of video signals with a predetermined timing;

a judgment step of forming a judgment as to whether or not said static picture extracted at said extracting step can be used as a representative picture based on whether or not said static picture is a part of a commercial; and

a setting step of setting said static picture as a representative picture in accordance with an outcome of a judgment formed at said judgment step.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): A computer readable medium storing computer program instructions for controlling a video-signal recording and playback apparatus for recording or playing back a video signal, which when executed by a computer programmed with the instructions, causes the computer to perform the following steps:

an extracting step of extracting a static picture from a sequence of video signals with a predetermined timing;

a judgment step of forming a judgment as to whether or not said static picture extracted at said extracting step can be used as a representative picture based on whether or not said static picture is a part of a commercial; and

a setting step of setting said static picture as a representative picture in accordance with an outcome of a judgment formed at said judgment step.

Claim 7 (Canceled).

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): ~~A video-signal recording and playback apparatus according to claim 7~~ A video-signal recording and playback apparatus for recording or playing back a video signal, said video-signal recording and playback apparatus comprising:

an extracting mechanism configured to extract a static picture from a sequence of video signals with a predetermined timing;

a judgment mechanism configured to form a judgment as to whether or not the static picture extracted by said extracting mechanism can be used as a representative picture; and  
a setting mechanism configured to set said static picture as a representative picture in accordance with an outcome of a judgment formed by said judgment mechanism, wherein said judgment mechanism is capable of forming a judgment as to whether or not a static picture extracted by said extracting mechanism can be used as a representative picture on the basis of whether or not said static picture is a part of a commercial.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): ~~A video-signal recording and playback apparatus according to claim 7~~ A video-signal recording and playback apparatus for recording or playing back a video signal, said video-signal recording and playback apparatus comprising:  
an extracting mechanism configured to extract a static picture from a sequence of video signals with a predetermined timing;  
a judgment mechanism configured to form a judgment as to whether or not the static picture extracted by said extracting mechanism can be used as a representative picture; and  
a setting mechanism configured to set said static picture as a representative picture in accordance with an outcome of a judgment formed by said judgment mechanism, wherein said judgment mechanism is capable of forming a judgment as to whether or not a static picture extracted by said extracting mechanism can be used as a representative picture on the basis of whether a histogram distribution of said static picture exceeds a predetermined threshold.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): ~~A video-signal recording and playback apparatus according to claim 7~~ A video-signal recording and playback apparatus for recording or playing back a video signal, said video-signal recording and playback apparatus comprising:

an extracting mechanism configured to extract a static picture from a sequence of video signals with a predetermined timing;

a judgment mechanism configured to form a judgment as to whether or not the static picture extracted by said extracting mechanism can be used as a representative picture; and

a setting mechanism configured to set said static picture as a representative picture in accordance with an outcome of a judgment formed by said judgment mechanism, wherein said judgment mechanism is capable of forming a judgment as to whether or not a static picture extracted by said extracting mechanism can be used as a representative picture on the basis of an edge of said static picture.

Claim 11 (New): A video-signal recording and playback method adopted in a video-signal recording and playback apparatus for recording or playing back a video signal, said video-signal recording and playback method comprising:

an extracting step of extracting a static picture from a sequence of video signals with a predetermined timing;

a judgment step of forming a judgment as to whether or not said static picture extracted at said extracting step can be used as a representative picture on the basis of whether a histogram distribution of said static picture exceeds a predetermined threshold; and

a setting step of setting said static picture as a representative picture in accordance with an outcome of a judgment formed at said judgment step.

Claim 12 (New): A video-signal recording and playback method adopted in a video-signal recording and playback apparatus for recording or playing back a video signal, said video-signal recording and playback method comprising:

an extracting step of extracting a static picture from a sequence of video signals with a predetermined timing;

a judgment step of forming a judgment as to whether or not said static picture extracted at said extracting step can be used as a representative picture on the basis of an edge of said static picture; and

a setting step of setting said static picture as a representative picture in accordance with an outcome of a judgment formed at said judgment step.

Claim 13 (New): A computer readable medium storing computer program instructions for controlling a video-signal recording and playback apparatus for recording or playing back a video signal, which when executed by a computer programmed with the instructions, causes the computer to perform the following steps:

an extracting step of extracting a static picture from a sequence of video signals with a predetermined timing;

a judgment step of forming a judgment as to whether or not said static picture extracted at said extracting step can be used as a representative picture on the basis of whether a histogram distribution of said static picture exceeds a predetermined threshold; and

a setting step of setting said static picture as a representative picture in accordance with an outcome of a judgment formed at said judgment step.

Claim 14 (New): A computer readable medium storing computer program instructions for controlling a video-signal recording and playback apparatus for recording or playing back a video signal, which when executed by a computer programmed with the instructions, causes the computer to perform the following steps:

an extracting step of extracting a static picture from a sequence of video signals with a predetermined timing;

a judgment step of forming a judgment as to whether or not said static picture extracted at said extracting step can be used as a representative picture on the basis of an edge of said static picture; and

a setting step of setting said static picture as a representative picture in accordance with an outcome of a judgment formed at said judgment step.